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6 (currently amended). A method of distinguishing an auditory alert signal from a background of one or more other auditory signals, the method comprising:

providing a selected alert signal at a first apparent location that is initially angularly displaced relative to a selected axis by a selected first azimuthal angle  $\phi_1$ ; and

causing the first apparent location of the alert signal to change to a second apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to the selected axis by a selected second azimuthal angle  $\phi_2$ , where  $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 15^\circ$ , within a selected time interval having a duration  $\Delta t$  lying in a range  $0.01 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 1 \text{ sec}$ .

7 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising allowing said apparent location of said alert signal to change to a third apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to said selected axis by a selected third azimuthal angle  $\phi_3$  where  $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 15^\circ$ , within a second selected time interval.

8 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising choosing at least one of said first azimuthal angle  $\phi_1$ , said second azimuthal angle  $\phi_2$  and said third azimuthal angle  $\phi_3$  so that at least one of the following constraints is satisfied:  $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 30^\circ$  and  $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 30^\circ$ .

9 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising choosing at least one of said first angle  $\phi_1$  and said second angle  $\phi_2$  to lie in a combined azimuthal angle range given by  $-120^\circ \leq \phi \leq -15^\circ$  plus  $15^\circ \leq \phi \leq 120^\circ$ .

10 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising causing said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location to occur continuously in said selected time interval.

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11 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising causing said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location to include at least one discontinuous change within said selected time interval.

12 (canceled). The method of claim 6, further comprising choosing a duration  $\Delta t$  for said selected time interval lying in a range  $0.01 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 1 \text{ sec}$ .

13 (currently amended). The method of claim 6, further comprising choosing [[a]] said duration  $\Delta t$  for said selected time interval ~~lying to lie~~ in a range  $0.05 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 0.2 \text{ sec}$ .

14 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising providing said alert signal through first and second earphones positioned adjacent to first and second ears, respectively, of a subject.

32 (currently amended). A system for distinguishing an auditory alert signal from a background of one or more other auditory signals, the system comprising:  
an alert signal source that:

provides a selected alert signal at a first apparent location that is initially angularly displaced relative to a selected axis by a selected by a first azimuthal angle  $\phi_1$ ; and

causes the first apparent location of the alert signal to change to a second apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to the selected axis by a selected second azimuthal angle  $\phi_2$ , where  $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 15^\circ$ , within a selected time interval having a duration  $\Delta t$  lying in a range  $0.01 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 1 \text{ sec}$ .

33 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said alert signal source:  
allows said apparent location of said alert signal to change to a third apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to said selected axis by a

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selected third azimuthal angle  $\phi_3$ , where  $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 15^\circ$ , within a second selected time interval having a duration  $\Delta t$  lying in a range  $0.01 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 1 \text{ sec}$ .

34 (currently amended). The system of claim [[33]] 32, wherein at least one of said first azimuthal angle  $\phi_1$ , said second azimuthal angle  $\phi_2$  and said third azimuthal angle  $\phi_3$  is chosen so that at least one of the following constraints is satisfied  $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 30^\circ$  and  $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 30^\circ$ .

35 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein at least one of said first angle  $\phi_1$  and said second angle  $\phi_2$  is chosen to lie in a combined azimuthal angle range given by  $-120^\circ \leq \phi \leq -15^\circ$  plus  $15^\circ \leq \phi \leq 120^\circ$ .

36 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location occurs continuously in said selected time interval.

37 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location includes at least one discontinuous change within said selected time interval.

38 (canceled). The system of claim 32, wherein a duration  $\Delta t$  for said selected time interval is chosen to lie in a range  $0.01 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 1 \text{ sec}$

39 (currently amended). The system of claim 32, wherein [[a]] said duration  $\Delta t$  for said selected time interval is chosen to lie in a range  $0.05 \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq 0.2 \text{ sec}$ .

40 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said alert signal is provided through first and second earphones positioned adjacent to first and second ears, respectively, of a subject.